

Fran Justin, Director
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ST. DAVID'S WELSH MALE CHORUS

"Singing For Your Pleasure"

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ST. DAVID'S SOCIETY
OF
LACKAWANNA COUNTY



Celebration

**Saturday, March 2, 2013
Genetti Manor
Dickson City, Pennsylvania**

Cymru Am Byth

PROGRAM

Introduction – Robert M. Davis, President

Pledge of Allegiance

Welsh National Anthem – Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau – Susan Drake

Accompanist – John Decker

National Anthem of the United States – Star Spangled Banner

Accompanist – John Decker

Invocation – Rev. Arthur W. Davis, Asbury United Methodist Church

Dinner

Welcome

Robert M. Davis, President

Recognition

*The Saint David's Society of Lackawanna County President's Award for
Outstanding Contribution to Welsh Heritage in Northeastern Pennsylvania
St. David's Male Chorus*

Investiture of the New President for 2013 and 2014

Dr. James T. Arscott

Toastmaster

Rev. Arthur W. Davis, Asbury United Methodist Church

Musical Program

Dallas Middle School Select Chorus

“Gymanfa Ganu” Hymn Sing

Dismissal

Benediction – Rev. Arthur W. Davis, Asbury United Methodist Church

Nos Da

“Born to Sing”¹

A Tribute to the St. David's Male Chorus

By

Brian D. Kaeb

Wales is still known as the “Land of Song” and the choral tradition still continues to have very strong roots in the cities, towns and villages in Wales as well as in those cities, towns and villages across North America. Choirs were generally spawned in the church or chapel where the Welsh were thus taught to sing at an early stage of their lives.

The St. David's Male Chorus is named for the patron saint of Wales; it bears the Welsh cognomen¹ and yet a goodly part of the membership present and past carried names like Zeiss, Zumbach, Satterthwaite, Pinto, Schultheis, Smith, Weber, Keller, Decker and Norton. Of course, the other names carry unmistakable Welsh names like Williams, Davies, Davis, Hughes, Morgan and the like.

Given that the Welsh language is considered one of the oldest and toughest in the world to learn, it is a tribute that these members of the St. David's Male Chorus, either those of Welsh heritage or others, sing with gusto and commitment.

The St. David's Male Chorus was organized in 1949 in Scranton by the late William R. Hughes, a native of Wales who moved to Scranton, and was patterned after the traditional male choruses in Wales. And much of the music is by Welsh composers like Arewel Hughes, Daniel Protheroe, Emyrs Jones and Bryun Davies. It is obvious that the most treasured parts of the group's repertory are Welsh hymns and religious songs. They guard a Scranton choral tradition that became known throughout the country and which produced some talents like Thomas L. Thomas, Allen Jones and others.



St. David's Male Chorus 1963

At one point in its career, the St. David's Male Chorus had a membership of nearly forty (40) men. Today it stands at twelve (12) very loyal men from several national backgrounds. The love of singing is the only requirement for joining. The chorus is not affiliated with any church or religious group.



St. David's Male Chorus 1968

There have been several accompanists of the St. David's Male Chorus over the last sixty-four (64) years. The first was the late Evelyn Butler, who was the Organist and Director of Music at Dunmore Presbyterian Church for fifty (50) years. She later became the Director of the chorus with the passing of William Hughes. She was described by the members at the time as "the glue and bonding agent of the group"¹. When Evelyn Butler became Director, the late Elda Hartman took on the roll of accompanist for several years.

And today, Mrs. Frances Justin has been the Director since 2004. Mr. Gene Hopkins is the current accompanist and is the Organist and Choir Director at Hickory Street Presbyterian Church in Scranton.



St. David's Male Chorus 1982



St. David's Male Chorus 1989

The St. David's Male Chorus has been active throughout Northeastern Pennsylvania since its beginning. It has sung for churches, civic and social organizations, retirement and nursing homes, also providing entertainment at many luncheons and banquets. The chorus' repertoire include show tunes, patriotic songs, folk songs, Christmas music during the holiday season, and well known Welsh melodies and hymns.



St. David's Male Chorus 1995¹

Despite its treasured amateur status, the St. David's Male Chorus has received recognition far beyond the churches, civic and social organizations, retirement and nursing homes. Members recall participating at the Welsh National Gymafa Ganu in Wilkes-Barre (1983), at the Lincoln Center at Fordham University² (1976) and other locales outside this region. They also performed at the West Point Chapel, on which occasion Evelyn Butler played the Chapel's grand organ. Those in attendance said, "What an honor it was to hear the chorus's accomplished voices resonate throughout the historic structure."



ST. DAVID'S CHORUS GOES TO NYC — St. David's Male Chorus depart from Hyde Park Presbyterian Church for Tuesday's performance at Fordham University, New York City. Their program of songs, entitled, "The Way of the Celt," was under the direction of Mrs. Evelyn Butler.

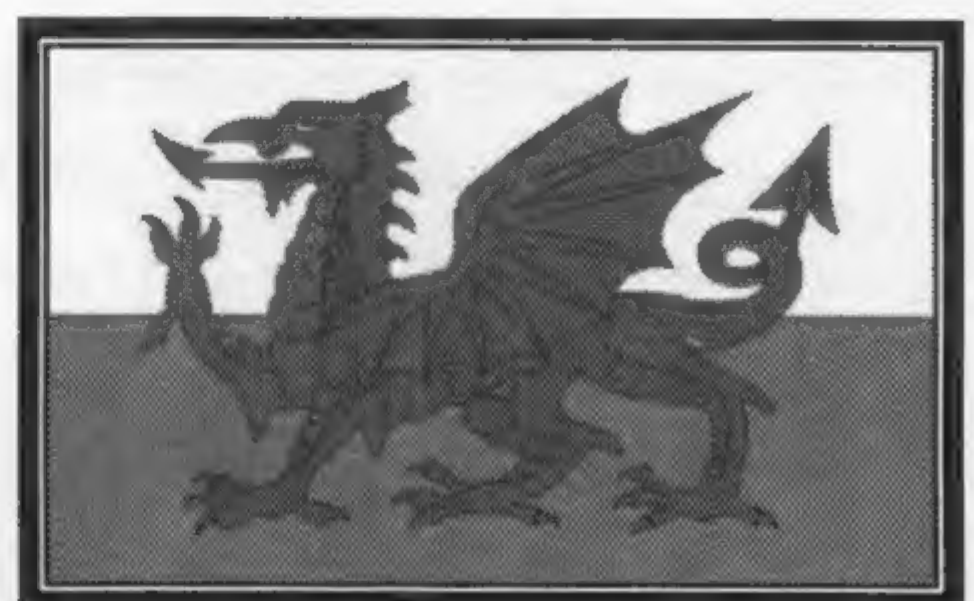
St. David's Male Chorus 1976²

In recognition for outstanding contribution, dedication and preservation of Welsh Heritage in Northeastern Pennsylvania, the St. David's Society of Lackawanna County is proud to honor the St. David's Male Chorus with the Society's President's award for 2013.



St. David's Male Chorus 2013

**Llongyfarchion!
(Congratulations!)**



Cymru Am Byth

Acknowledgements

This article would not have been possible without the support of many people. The Society wishes to express his deepest gratitude to Shirley Davies, whose husband the late Wyndham Davies sang with the chorus for more than forty (40) years. She was abundantly helpful and offered invaluable assistance, support, pictures and insight into the chorus's long history.

Deep gratitude is also due to Fran Justin and Warren Grill for contributing their knowledge and assistance for this article.

Special thanks also to Suzie Decker, whose brother John and their father Clarence sang with the chorus for many years, for lending some of her personal knowledge and history of the chorus.

The Society wishes to express its gratitude to the St. David's Male Chorus, their Director and accompanist, for their love of singing and their dedication in keeping the choral tradition alive in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

Below is a listing of some of the members^{1, 2}, present and past, which performed with the chorus over the last forty plus years:

Rev. David Westlake	Willard Jenkins	David Harris
William R. Hughes	Dr. Robert Davis	Russ Hurd
Art Williams	Willard Thomas	John Fox
Clarence Decker	John Decker	Al Thorne
Rev. Henry George	Al Zeiss	George Wickkiser
Thomas Harris	Harry Reese	Loren Davies
John Evans	Jack Evans	Lionel Satterthwaite
Wyndham Davies	Thomas Gable	Daniel Morgan
Kenneth Clabough	Glynn Williams	Reynold Morgan
Warren Grill	Paul Pickrell	Lee Keller
Phil Thomas	Arthur Wagner	Charles Reidenbach
John Koch	Edward Harris	Rev. Charles Price
Edward Rudis	Jim Justin	Chuck Weber
Tim Norton	Gus Reed	Bill Lindberg
Gene Schultheis	Les Smith	George Zumbach
Tony Pinto	William Jenkins	David Gilpin

References

¹Cusick, Daniel L. (1995, May 19). Today's Living: Born to Sing. The Tribune. Scranton, PA. p. C1, C5.

²Male Chorus To Sing Welsh Songs in N.Y. (1976, May 11). The Tribune. Scranton, PA.